

§ 679.40

50 CFR Ch. VI (10–1–11 Edition)

CDQ and PSQ catch accounting requirements in paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section including the retention of all groundfish CDQ, if Option 1 under § 679.32(d)(2)(ii) is selected. CDQ species must be discarded when required by other provisions in subpart B of this part or, in waters within the State of Alaska, when discard is required by laws of the State of Alaska.

(4) *Observer coverage requirements.* The owner or operator of a vessel equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA halibut CDQ fishing as defined at § 679.2 or shoreside processors taking deliveries from vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA that are halibut CDQ fishing must comply with observer coverage requirements at § 679.50(c)(4) and (d)(4).

(5) *Seabird avoidance requirements.* The CDQ group, and vessel owner or operator must comply with all of the seabird avoidance requirements at § 679.42(b)(2).

[63 FR 30407, June 4, 1998]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 679.32, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.fdsys.gov.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 63 FR 30407, June 4, 1998, § 679.32 was revised. Paragraph (c)(4)(i) contains information collection and record-keeping requirements and will not become effective until approval has been given by the Office of Management and Budget.

Subpart D—Individual Fishing Quota Management Measures

§ 679.40 Sablefish and halibut QS.

The Regional Administrator shall annually divide the TAC of halibut and sablefish that is apportioned to the fixed gear fishery pursuant to the annual management measures published in the FEDERAL REGISTER pursuant to § 300.62 of chapter III of this title and § 679.20, minus the CDQ reserve, among qualified halibut and sablefish quota share holders, respectively.

(a) *Initial allocation of QS—(1) General.* The Regional Administrator shall initially assign to qualified persons, on or after October 18, 1994, halibut and sablefish fixed gear fishery QS that are specific to IFQ regulatory areas and vessel categories. QS will be assigned

as a block in the appropriate IFQ regulatory area and vessel category, if that QS would have resulted in an allocation of less than 20,000 lb (9 mt) of IFQ for halibut or sablefish based on the 1994 TAC for fixed gear in those fisheries for specific IFQ regulatory areas and the QS pools of those fisheries for specific IFQ regulatory areas as of October 17, 1994.

(2) *Qualified person.* (i) As used in this section, a “qualified person” means a “person,” as defined in § 679.2:

(A) That owned a vessel that made legal landings of halibut or sablefish, harvested with fixed gear, from any IFQ regulatory area in any QS qualifying year; or

(B) That leased a vessel that made legal landings of halibut or sablefish, harvested with fixed gear, from any IFQ regulatory area in any QS qualifying year. A person who owns a vessel cannot be a qualified person based on the legal fixed gear landings of halibut or sablefish made by a person who leased the vessel for the duration of the lease.

(C) Who is a citizen of the United States at the time of application for QS.

(D) Who is a corporation, partnership, association, or other non-individual entity that would have qualified to document a fishing vessel as a vessel of the United States during the QS qualifying years of 1988, 1989, and 1990.

(ii) Qualified persons, or their successors-in-interest, must exist at the time of their application for QS.

(iii) A former partner of a dissolved partnership or a former shareholder of a dissolved corporation who would otherwise qualify as a person may apply for QS in proportion to his or her interest in the dissolved partnership or corporation.

(iv) Sablefish harvested within Prince William Sound, or under a State of Alaska limited entry program, will not be considered in determining whether a person is a qualified person.

(3) *Qualification for QS—(i) Year.* A QS qualifying year is 1988, 1989, or 1990.

(ii) *Vessel ownership.* Evidence of vessel ownership shall be limited to the following documents, in order of priority:

(A) For vessels required to be documented under the laws of the United States, the USCG abstract of title issued in respect of that vessel.

(B) A certificate of registration that is determinative as to vessel ownership.

(C) A bill of sale.

(iii) *Vessel lease*. Conclusive evidence of a vessel lease will include a written vessel lease agreement or a notarized statement from the vessel owner and lease holder attesting to the existence of a vessel lease agreement at any time during the QS qualifying years. Conclusive evidence of a vessel lease must identify the leased vessel and indicate the name of the lease holder and the period of time during which the lease was in effect. Other evidence, which may not be conclusive, but may tend to support a vessel lease, may also be submitted.

(iv) *Ownership interest*. Evidence of ownership interest in a dissolved partnership or corporation shall be limited to corporate documents (e.g., articles of incorporation) or notarized statements signed by each former partner, shareholder or director, and specifying their proportions of interest.

(v) *Legal landing of halibut or sablefish*—(A) *Definition*. As used in this section, a “legal landing of halibut or sablefish” means halibut or sablefish harvested with fixed gear and landed in compliance with state and Federal regulations in effect at the time of the landing.

(B) *Documentation*. Evidence of legal landings shall be limited to documentation of state or Federal catch reports that indicate the amount of halibut or sablefish harvested, the IPHC regulatory area or groundfish reporting area in which it was caught, the vessel and gear type used to catch it, and the date of harvesting, landing, or reporting. State catch reports are Alaska, Washington, Oregon, or California fish tickets. Federal catch reports are production reports required under §679.5. Sablefish harvested within Prince William Sound or under a State of Alaska limited entry program will not be considered in determining qualification to receive QS, nor in calculating initial QS.

(4) *Calculation of initial QS*—(i) *Halibut QS*. The Regional Administrator shall calculate the halibut QS for any qualified person in each IFQ regulatory area based on that person’s highest total legal landings of halibut in each IPHC regulatory area for any 5 years of the 7-year halibut QS base period 1984 through 1990. The sum of all halibut QS for an IFQ regulatory area will be the halibut QS pool for that area.

(ii) *Sablefish QS*. The Regional Administrator shall calculate the sablefish QS for any qualified person in each IFQ regulatory area based on that person’s highest total legal landings of sablefish in each groundfish reporting area for any 5 years of the 6-year sablefish QS base period 1985 through 1990. The sum of all sablefish QS for an IFQ regulatory area will be the sablefish QS pool for that area.

(iii) *CDQ program*. Each initial QS calculation will be modified to accommodate the CDQ program prescribed at subpart C of this part.

(5) *Assignment of QS to vessel categories*—(i) *LOA*. Each qualified person’s QS will be assigned to a vessel category based on the LOA of vessel(s) from which that person made fixed gear legal landings of groundfish or halibut in the most recent year of participation and the product type landed. As used in this paragraph (a)(5), “the most recent year of participation” means the most recent of 4 calendar years in which any groundfish or halibut were harvested using fixed gear, as follows: 1988, 1989, or 1990; or calendar year 1991 prior to September 26, 1991.

(ii) *Vessel categories*. QS and its associated IFQ assigned to vessel categories include:

(A) Category A QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit holder to harvest and process IFQ species on a vessel of any length;

(B) Category B QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit holder to harvest IFQ species on a vessel of any length;

(C) Category C QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit holder to harvest IFQ species on a vessel less than or equal to 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA;

(D) Category D QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit

holder to harvest IFQ halibut on a vessel less than or equal to 35 ft (10.7 m) LOA, except as provided in § 679.42(a).

(iii) *QS assignment*. A qualified person's QS will be assigned:

(A) To vessel category A if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel processed any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(B) To vessel category B if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(C) To each applicable vessel category in proportion to the landings of halibut or sablefish made by that person if, at any time during their most recent year of participation, that person used more than one vessel in different categories.

(iv) *Sablefish QS*. A qualified person's sablefish QS will be assigned:

(A) To vessel category C if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was less than or equal to 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(B) To the vessel category in which halibut and groundfish were landed, or vessel categories in proportion to the total fixed gear landings of halibut and groundfish, if, at any time during the most recent year of participation, that person's vessel(s) makes no landing(s) of sablefish.

(v) *Halibut QS*. A qualified person's halibut QS will be assigned:

(A) To vessel category C if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was less than or equal to 60 ft (18.3 m), but greater than 35 ft (10.7 m), LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(B) To vessel category D if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was less than or equal to 35 ft (10.7 m) LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(C) To the vessel category in which groundfish were landed, or vessel categories in proportion to the total fixed gear landings of groundfish, if, at any time during the most recent year of

participation, that person's vessel(s) makes no landing(s) of halibut.

(vi) *Both species QS*. A qualified person's QS for both species will be assigned to the vessel category in which groundfish were landed in the most recent year of participation if, at any time during that year, that person landed halibut in one vessel category and sablefish in a different vessel category.

(6) *Application for initial QS*—(i) *Application form*. The Application period for QS ended on July 15, 1994. As of that date, the Request for QS Application form replaced the QS Application form as the means by which the Administrator, RAM, reviews and makes initial administrative determinations on requests for initial allocations of QS. A Request for QS Application must contain the following: information identifying the individual, representative of a deceased fisherman's estate, corporation, partnership, or other non-individual entity, or dissolved corporation, partnership, or other non-individual entity making the request; contact numbers; vessel identification, length overall, and purchase date; and information on any vessel leasing arrangement pertinent to the claim of eligibility.

(ii) *Application period*. An application period of no less than 180 days will be specified by notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER and other information sources that the Regional Administrator deems appropriate.

(iii) *Complete application*. Complete applications received by the Regional Administrator will be acknowledged. An incomplete application will be returned to the applicant with specific kinds of information identified that are necessary to make it complete.

(7) *Insufficient documentation*. Halibut and sablefish catch history, vessel ownership or lease data, and other information supplied by an applicant will be compared with data compiled by the Regional Administrator. If additional data presented in an application are not consistent with the data compiled by the Regional Administrator, the applicant will be notified of insufficient documentation. The applicant will have 90 days to submit corroborating documents (as specified in paragraph

(a) of this section) in support of his/her application or to resubmit a revised application. All applicants will be limited to one opportunity to provide corroborating documentation or a revised application in response to notification of insufficient documentation.

(8) *Verified data.* Uncontested data in applications will be approved by the Regional Administrator. Based on these data, the Regional Administrator will calculate each applicant's initial halibut and sablefish QS, as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, for each IFQ regulatory area, respectively, and will add each applicant's halibut and sablefish QS for an IFQ regulatory area to the respective QS pool for that area.

(9) *Unverified data.* Catch history, vessel ownership, or lease data that cannot be verified by the Regional Administrator, following the procedure described in paragraph (a)(7) of this section, will not qualify for QS. An initial determination denying QS on the grounds that claimed catch history, vessel ownership or lease data were not verified may be appealed following the procedure described in §679.43. Quota share reflecting catch history, vessel ownership, or lease data that are contested between two or more applicants, at least one of which is likely to qualify for QS when the dispute is resolved, will be assigned to a reserve that will be considered part of the QS pool for the appropriate IFQ regulatory area. Any QS and IFQ that results from agency action resolving the dispute will be assigned to the prevailing applicant(s) pursuant to paragraphs (a)(4), (a)(5), (b), and (c) of this section. If the assigned IFQ for the 1995 fishing season becomes moot by passage of time needed to resolve the dispute, the assignment of QS and IFQ for subsequent fishing seasons will be unaffected.

(b) *Annual allocation of IFQ.* The Regional Administrator shall assign halibut or sablefish IFQs to each person holding unrestricted QS for halibut or sablefish, respectively, up to the limits prescribed in §679.42 (e) and (f). Each assigned IFQ will be specific to an IFQ regulatory area and vessel category, and will represent the maximum amount of halibut or sablefish that may be harvested from the specified IFQ regulatory area and by the person

to whom it is assigned during the specified fishing year, unless the IFQ assignment is changed by the Regional Administrator within the fishing year because of an approved transfer or because all or part of the IFQ is sanctioned for violating rules of this part.

(c) *Calculation of annual IFQ allocation—(1) General.* The annual allocation of IFQ to any person (person p) in any IFQ regulatory area (area a) will be equal to the product of the TAC of halibut or sablefish by fixed gear for that area (after adjustment for purposes of the Western Alaska CDQ Program) and that person's QS divided by the QS pool for that area. Overages will be subtracted from a person's IFQ pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section. Expressed algebraically, the annual IFQ allocation formula is as follows:

$$IFQ_{pa} = [(fixed\ gear\ TAC_a - CDQ\ reserve_a) \times (QS_{pa}/QS\ pool_a)] - overage\ of\ IFQ_{pa}.$$

(2) *QS amounts.* For purposes of calculating IFQs for any fishing year, the amount of a person's QS and the amount of the QS pool for any IFQ regulatory area will be the amounts on record with the Alaska Region, NMFS, as of 1200 hours, A.l.t., on January 31 of that year.

(3) *IFQ permit.* The Regional Administrator shall issue to each QS holder, pursuant to §679.4, an IFQ permit specifying the maximum amount of halibut and sablefish that may be harvested with fixed gear in a specified IFQ regulatory area and vessel category. Such IFQ permits will be sent to each QS holder at the address on record for that person prior to the start of the IFQ fishing season or to any IFQ holder(s) following transfers or penalties (15 CFR part 904).

(d) *Ten-percent adjustment policy.* A person's annual IFQ account will be adjusted in the year following a determination that the person harvested or landed IFQ species in an amount is greater than the amount available in the person's annual IFQ account and if the amount greater than the amount available does not exceed 10 percent of the amount available in the person's annual IFQ account at the time of landing. The adjustment would be a deduction of the amount of IFQ species

harvested or landed that was determined to exceed the amount available in the person's annual IFQ account and will apply to any person to whom the affected IFQ is allocated in the year following the determination.

(e) *Underages.* Underages of up to 10 percent of a person's total annual IFQ account for a current fishing year will be added to that person's annual IFQ account in the year following determination of the underage. This underage adjustment to the annual IFQ allocation will be specific to IFQ species, IFQ regulatory area, and vessel category for which an IFQ is calculated, and will apply to any person to whom the affected IFQ is allocated in the year following determination of an underage.

(f) *Harvesting privilege.* Quota shares allocated or permits issued pursuant to this part do not represent either an absolute right to the resource or any interest that is subject to the "takings" provision of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Rather, such quota shares or permits represent only a harvesting privilege that may be revoked or amended subject to the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable law.

(g) *External research tags for halibut and sablefish.* (1) Nothing contained in this part 679 shall prohibit any person at any time from retaining and landing a Pacific halibut or sablefish that bears at the time of capture an external research tag from any state, Federal, or international agency, provided that the halibut or sablefish is one of the following:

(i) A Pacific halibut landed pursuant to § 300.62 of this title and to this part 679; or

(ii) A sablefish landed in accordance with the Tagged Groundfish Research Program, and in compliance with all sablefish requirements of this part 679.

(2) Halibut and sablefish bearing an external research tag from any state, Federal, or international agency, landed pursuant to paragraph (g)(1)(i) or (g)(1)(ii) of this section, and in accordance with § 679.5(l), shall be excluded from IFQ or CDQ deduction as follows:

(i) The fish shall not be calculated as part of a person's IFQ harvest of halibut or sablefish and shall not be deb-

ited against a person's halibut IFQ or a person's sablefish IFQ; or

(ii) The fish shall not be calculated as part of the CDQ harvest of halibut or sablefish and shall not be debited against a CDQ group's halibut CDQ or a CDQ group's sablefish CDQ.

(h) *Properly debited landing.*—(1) *Permit holder's account.* Except as provided in paragraph (g) of this section, all IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, and IFQ sablefish catch onboard a vessel must be weighed and debited from the IFQ permit holder's account or CDQ halibut permit holder's account under which the catch was harvested.

(2) *Properly debited account.* A properly concluded sablefish/halibut IFQ landing receipt, crab IFQ landing receipt, or a manual IFQ landing report which is signed by the Registered Buyer and IFQ permit holder or IFQ hired master permit holder or CDQ hired master permit holder constitutes confirmation that the IFQ permit holder's or CDQ permit holder's account is properly debited.

(3) *Source of debit.* NMFS shall use the following sources (see paragraphs (h)(3)(i) and (ii) of this section) of information to debit a CDQ halibut, IFQ halibut, or IFQ sablefish account:

(i) *Unprocessed landing.* If offload of unprocessed IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, or IFQ sablefish from a vessel, the scale weight (to the nearest pound) of the halibut or sablefish product actually measured at the time of offload, as required by § 679.5(e)(7)(i)(E)(6) to be included in the IFQ Landing Report.

(ii) *Processed landing.* If offload of processed IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, or IFQ sablefish from a vessel, the scale weight (to the nearest pound) of the halibut or sablefish processed product actually measured at or before the time of offload. If the product scale weights are taken before the time of offload, then the species and actual product weight of each box or container must be visibly marked on the

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outside of each container to facilitate inspection by OLE or designees.

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§ 679.41 Transfer of quota shares and IFQ.

(a) *General.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, transfer of QS or IFQ means any transaction requiring QS, or the use thereof in the form of IFQ, to pass from one person to another, permanently or for a fixed period of time.

(2) Transactions requiring IFQ permits to be issued in the name of a hired master employed by an individual or a corporation are not transfers of QS or IFQ.

(b) *Transfer procedure*—(1) *Application for transfer.* An Application for Transfer of QS/IFQ (Application for Transfer) must be approved by the Regional Administrator before a person may use IFQ to harvest IFQ halibut or IFQ sablefish, whether the IFQ was the result of a direct transfer or the result of a QS transfer. An Application for Transfer will not be approved until the Regional Administrator has reviewed and approved the transfer agreement signed by the parties to the transaction. The Regional Administrator shall provide an Application for Transfer form to any person on request. Persons who submit an Application for Transfer to the Regional Administrator for approval will receive notification of the Regional Administrator's decision to approve or disapprove the Application for Transfer, and, if applicable, the reason(s) for disapproval, by mail posted on the date of that decision, unless another communication mode is requested on the Application for Transfer.

(2) *QS or IFQ accounts.* QS or IFQ accounts affected by an Application for Transfer approved by the Regional Administrator will change on the date of approval. Any necessary IFQ permits will be sent with the notification of the Regional Administrator's decision.

(c) *Application for Transfer approval criteria.* Except as provided in paragraph (f) of this section, an Application for Transfer will not be approved until the Regional Administrator has determined that:

(1) The person applying for transfer received the QS or IFQ to be transferred:

(i) By initial assignment by the Regional Administrator as provided in § 679.40(a); or

(ii) By approved transfer.

(2) The person applying to receive the QS or IFQ meets the requirements of eligibility in paragraph (d) of this section.

(3) The person applying for transfer and the person applying to receive the QS or IFQ have their notarized signatures on the Application for Transfer.

(4) There are no fines, civil penalties, or other payments due and owing, or outstanding permit sanctions, resulting from Federal fishery violations involving either person.

(5) The person applying to receive the QS or IFQ currently exists.

(6) The transfer would not cause the person applying to receive the QS or IFQ to exceed the use limits in § 679.42 (e) or (f).

(7) The transfer would not violate the provisions of paragraph (g) of this section.

(8)(i) The person applying to make or receive the IFQ or QS transfer has paid all IFQ fees that have become due as a result of an initial administrative determination.

(ii) The person applying to make or receive the IFQ or QS transfer who has not paid all IFQ fees that are due (as provided under § 679.45(a)) has timely appealed the administrative determination that IFQ fees have not been paid in full and has submitted to NMFS an amount sufficient to satisfy any disputed liability pending a final agency action.

(9) Other pertinent information requested on the Application for Transfer has been supplied to the satisfaction of the Regional Administrator.

(10) If the person applying to transfer or receive QS or IFQ is a CQE, the following determinations are required for each eligible community represented by that CQE: